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Swarthmore Phoenix

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Swarthmore: A Maker of Men or Minds? Hamburg Show ...

By David Hamilton

For him and for all the proponents of liberal education, wrote Alexander Meiklejohn, "the objection that the college should make Men rather than Minds is the most aggressive and misleading of our opponents."

In this same passage from *The Liberal College*, he described the way in which the college would make Men according to that objection: "bodies should be strengthened, friendships should be established, manners should be acquired, spirits should be purified, appreciations should be enriched and directed, the will should be fortified and inspired and subjugated, all the powers of body, mind, and soul should be so trained and correlated that from them should be made such a man as a man should be." (my emphasis).

The theory that the college should make Men rather than Minds finds a more sophisticated exposition in our own "Swarthmore College Bulletin" wherein it is plainly declared, "The purpose of Swarthmore College is to make its students more valuable human beings and more useful members of society." Allowing for the fact that college catalogues are seldom, if ever, to be taken seriously, what are we to make of this? What is wrong, you say, with becoming a "more valuable human being," a more useful member of society, or for that matter, why not have the spirit purified and the will fortified, inspired, subjugated? There is, I say, plenty wrong— in the college.

Let the individual describe his life in these terms if it seems to him useful to do so, but let the college trend more lightly; for even after we have found the scale on which to measure the value of human beings, and have identified the improved condition

with others. From the sweat and struggle he learns "the effectiveness of enthusiasm and the frustration of indifference; he learns to "soften...unofficial intolerance;" and he learns "the meaning of responsibility." If true, I take this to be no less than a miracle; by all means let us introduce parliamentary procedure wherever possible.

The whole idea, however, is as confused as it is optimistic. From it we get a glorious magnification of the college but little sense of its real purposes and uses—what distinguishes it from other institutions which also claim to work toward the greater worth of the individual. All of these other institutions may provide, in greater or lesser degree, the materials out of which the individual will increase his own worth and strength. They all educate him, in other words. Since they all do, Swarthmore should give more recognition to the obvious fact that "the college training" is a limited, special thing. It is not all of education, it is not even all of the education which one receives in the four years of its duration.

In a somewhat sentimental desire to do everything—to make the Whole Man, the college fails to direct its self-consciousness towards a more sensible aim, an aim for which it is uniquely suited. Meiklejohn suggests what this might be in its simplest sense: "to give...an intellectual grasp of human experience." This is grand enough.

The main purpose of the liberal college (Swarthmore is a liberal college, although the word or the idea is not mentioned in the catalogue until long after geography, democracy, Quakerism, and extracurricular activities have been discussed) is to train minds, not personalities. Of course it follows that in doing this it does make of its students more valuable human beings.

All actions and policies, and this includes the college rules, should properly be evaluated in their relation to this central intellectual purpose. If the training of minds is furthered by a greater physical integration of the campus, let that place; let everyone live closer together, if by being always together in the same place, thought is stimulated. I think it unlikely that this will be the result; it seems more likely that the reverse would be true, that the stagnation which is already noticeable would be increased as everyone would be left with only common experiences to discuss.

Just as it is not necessary that for the particular four years during which they attend Swarthmore, that all students should live in precisely the same circumstances, it does not facilitate concentration on learning to have the college attempting to absorb and channel all the energies of students, and it is not desirable to regulate the private lives of students more than the minimum necessary for the main purpose of the college to be fulfilled. Rules cannot, I believe, be justified on any other grounds, and to be justified on these grounds involves something more than sanction by tradition.

Last of all, let us please not contribute to still another false view of the college with a system of rules which protects students from themselves. The false view I refer to is that college—Swarthmore—"is a relatively safe place for a boy (or girl); Meiklejohn was writing as President of Amherst) when he (she) first leaves home."

(Continued from page 1)

enunciates her lyrics). "Turtles" was, perhaps, a bit overdone but came off well as three capers, Bryan Mangrum '60, Robert Krasner '61 and Evan Powell '60 looked for a rather suggestive turtle.

Act two had its bright moments although they came more seldom. Cam action with Lena M'ginn '60 and Mangrum was sung well although the dancing was less received. Steven Gibborn '60, who does not sing very well, and his material to his liking. There was a little more of Peter Friedman but not much material. A lot more of Bob Kramer who did not seem to need material. A little stalling, lying and acting and then Nelson faces the world as Grubnik rants in the snack bar, Robert Patton '60 sang one of the most beautiful songs, "Liberty, Equality, Conformity." A rather chorate finale followed with Nelson and Caplan telling us this wasn't the end, there was more. They were wrong.

Someone remarked afterward "After the first and second act I wished it would go on forever—then it did!"

The third act was impressively labored with spies and plots. The only political implication this reviewer could glean is that it takes a long time for the Russians to say "yes." For one short moment Wentworth Orantay-Kodjoe '61 accused the audience with a eulypso song. By this time the actors were tired and the audience was tired too! It was all I could do to not the thing through.

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Title	Swarthmore Phoenix
Alternate Title	The Phoenix
Subject	Swarthmore College; Students; Periodicals
Description	An archive of the Phoenix student newspaper from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania
Publisher	Swarthmore, Pa; Undergraduate staff
Original Date	1957-11-26
Type	Student newspaper
Original Format/Genre	Newspaper
Source	microfilm
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Subject	Swarthmore College; Students; Periodicals
Description	An archive of the Phoenix student newspaper from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania
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Type	Student newspaper
Original Format/Genre	Newspaper
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Transcript	enunciates her lyrics). 'Turtles' was, perhaps, a bit overdone but came off well as three capers, Bryan Mangrum '60, Robert Kramer '61 and Evan Powell '60 looked for a rather suggestive turtle. Act two had its bright moments a though they came more seldom. Oum action with Lvnn M'Jffr'm '60 an" Mangrum was sung w?Il the dancing wa« 1 -c nceived. Steven Gilborn '59, who fio~s n-Dt sing vorv well. * h's material to his liking. There was a little more of Peter Friedman but not much material. A lot more of Bob Kramer who did not seem to need material. A little stalling, libing and a-'-,v---ing and then Nelson f?c~s thC; world as Grubnik rants :n the snack bar. Robert Patten '60 sang one of the most h - Deful songs, "Liberty, Equality, Conformity." A rfttier olaoorate finale followed w!th Nelson and Caplan telling us this wasn't the end, there was more. They were wrong. Someone remarked afterward "After the first and second act I wished it would go on foreverthen it did!" The third act was impossibly labored with spies and plots. The only political implication this reviewer could glean is that it takes a long time for the Russians to say "yes." For one short moment Wentworth Ofuatey-Kodjoe '61 aroused the audience with a calypso song. Bv this time the actors were tired and the was tired an-? it was all ould do to sec the thing throue\ Swarthmore: A Maker of Men or Minds? By David Hamilton For him and for all the proponents of liberal education, wrote Alexander Meiklejohn, "The objection that the college should make Men rather than Minds is the most aggressive and headstrong of our opponents."In this same passage: fr--*rr The. Liberal College, he described the way in which the college would make Men according to that objection: "bodies should be strengthened, friendships should be established, manners should be acquired, spirits should be purified, appreciations should be enriched and directed, the will should be fortified and inspired and subjugated, all the powers of body, mind, and soul should be so trained nnd correlated that from them shall be made such a man as a man should be" Tmy err-phas^I. The theory that the college should make Men rather than Minds finds a more sophisticated exposition in our own "Swarthmore College Bulletin" wherein it is plainly declared, "The purpose of Swarthmore College is to make its students more valuable human beings and more useful members of society." Allowing for the fact that college catalogues are seldom, if ever, to be taken seriously, what are we to make of this? What is wrong, you say, with becoming a "more valuable human being," a more useful member of society, or for that matter, why not have the spirit purified and the will fortified, inspired, subjugated ? There is, I say, plenty wrongfor the college. Let the individual describe his* fife in these terms if it seems to him useful to do so, but let the college tread more lightly; for even after we have found the scale on which to measure the value of human beings and have identified the improved condition of the will, we would ask how the college proposes to bring these wonderful things about, and what particular qualifications it brings to the task. What goads it to such an immodest (or fuzzy) appraisal of its role? At Swarthmore we would find the origin of so high and vast a purpose as the making of more valuable human beings in two things: a justifiable pride in

the intellectual tradition of the College, the system of learning, and the quality of the Participants; and also the plain illusion of self-sufficiency. This is the idea which finds in the college the possibilities for an ideal community where may be reproduced (in miniature?) all, or at least most, of the experiences necessary to any individual for his total development. Of course no one will acknowledge paternity in this case, but here is the idea again, elaborated in the catalogue: "Growth in emotional maturity. . . is an integral part of the total educational Program." Thus, says the College Bulletin, parliamentary procedure and the "victories and defeats of elective office" teach the student to live with others. From the sweat and struggle he looms "the effectiveness of enthusiasm and the frustration of indifference; he learns to "soften. . . uncritical intolerance;" and he learns "the meaning of responsibility." If true, I take this to be no less than a miracle; by all means let us introduce parliamentary procedure wherever possible. The whole idea, however, is as confused as it is optimistic. From it we get a glorious magnification of the college but little sense of its real purposes and uses—what distinguishes it from other institutions which also claim to work toward the greater worth of the individual. All of these other institutions may provide, in greater or lesser degree, the materials out of which the individual will increase his own worth and strength. They all educate him, in other words. Since they all do, Swarthmore should give more recognition to the obvious fact that "the college training is a limited, special thing. It is not all of education, it is not even all of the education one receives in the four years of its duration." 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The tests, which are technically known as push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, squat-jumps, and the 880-yard dash, were administered to members both of PF classes and of inter-collegiate teams, at the Lamb-Miller Field House.* On the first four tests there was no time limit, so the object was to find the total number of each exercise the individual could do. Willis J. Stetson, director of athletics, stated that "there is an increasing national awareness of the poor physical fitness of Americans as compared with people of other countries." Vice-President Richard Nixon heads a committee to look into the problem, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association has taken steps in the matter. Swarthmore's own athletic conference, the Middle Atlantic States Collegiate Athletic Conference, has suggested to the Middle States Association that a good physical education setup be one of the requirements for a college to be accredited. Swarthmore's first series of tests is to discover how our college men compare with the national norm. A second group of tests will be given in May, 1958, to discover the improvement, if any, in physical fitness due to the College's athletic program. Each time the individual will be ranked according to the highest in the group, but his score will have no effect on his PF grade. Tuesday, November 26, 1957 THE SWARTHMORE PHOENIX 3 Hamburg Show... (Continued from page 1) BALA THEATER Starts Thurs. Phila.-Premiere AN UPROARIOUS COMEDY THAT THE BRITISH HAVE A KNACK FOR RANK ORG. 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